

The Good Life - Interrupted

Citizen Efforts to Clean up Tega Cay Water Service, Inc.



Tega Cay Water Citizen Advisory Council, August 2011

How would you like this in your yard, flowing into Lake Wylie?



Lift Station 3

Inadequate Response Time

3. **Five hours** for TCWS to respond to a **severely gushing manhole** in a **crowded Lake Wylie cove**!?
- This negligence **directly contradicts company policy** of “onsite assistance within 30 minutes of a spill.”
 - TCWS rationale in March 2009 was that it was responding to **5-10 other similar spills during heavy rains**.
 - TCWS is **understaffed** during critical, heavy-volume periods.



Lift Station 3

*Erosion caused by
sanitary sewage
overflow*

March 25, 2006

Lift station spews raw sewage into Lake Wylie



March 25, 2006

Lift Station 3

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Sewage runs to Lake Wylie



March 25, 2006

Lift Station 3

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1 ranking things that we asked in a joint meeting
2 with Tega Cay Water Service and DHEC. That they
3 correct the multiple sewage spills in the same
4 locations unreported and under reported sewage
5 spills. Five hours to respond to a severely
6 gushing manhole in a crowded lake, shoddy repair
7 work, inadequate maintenance, delayed mandated
8 waste water treatment plant upgrades, inadequate
9 sewage spills notification to residents, customer
10 service phone line with often long wait periods,
11 and rude unhelpful agents, poor lift station and
12 waste water treatment plant aesthetics, unused Tega
13 Cay pump and well houses in city property. All
14 this despite rate hikes in 1999, 2006 and 2010.
15 And already we've noticed that they were planning
16 for the next rate hike, which is now. The multiple
17 sewage spills in the same locations, the under
18 reported sewage spills, you will see pictures of
19 all of this. This is a sewage spill that occurred
20 one house away from my house. This was a second
21 photograph of the same location. This shows you
22 toilet paper, feminine products, etcetera, flowing
23 out of the manhole into the lake. Five hours for
24 Tega Cay Water Services to respond to a severely
25 gushing manhole. This was underreported. I took

1 this picture myself on March the 25th, 2006. If you
2 see what I'm looking at, it's showing you how long
3 this water has run to create that type of erosion
4 going into the lake. This shows you that same
5 manhole as it spewed out, notice the multiple times
6 this was patched and repaired; and, again, that
7 mandate effect applied to it. This is a manhole
8 that was left open. Notice the stick in there
9 where the children have been playing? I just
10 wonder what the company would do had a child fallen
11 into that hole. This is a repair job on that same
12 lift station one house from my house. If you look
13 carefully, you'll see where the electrical wires
14 are. They put a plastic baggy over it. That
15 manhole lift lid is half open, allowing the odors
16 from the wet well to go all over the community for
17 months. This is a pipe at my house on Good Friday,
18 April the 22nd, 2011, while my children were
19 visiting, I had sewer flowing through my basement.
20 Fortunately, my husband was able to go out and open
21 the clean out, and the rest of it went outside.
22 And Tega Cay reported it was a 25 gallon spill. It
23 shows you the roots growing into the pipes. Again,
24 delayed waste water treatment plant upgrades. DHEC
25 mandated in 2006 that they complete a waste water

1 personally have experienced have been around e-statement
2 or moving to online statements versus hardcopy
3 statements.

4 In my experience the average has been about \$1.50
5 to \$1.75 per statement that we were able to move to
6 electronic. And essentially that's part of the
7 operating costs that we're already paying, of course.
8 Whether that's going to operating costs or whether
9 that's going to return on investment, that's to be seen.

10 CHAIRMAN FLEMING: Okay, thank you. You may
11 be seated.

12 [WHEREUPON, the witness was excused.]

13 [Witness sworn/affirmed]

14 THEREUPON came,

15 L I N D A S T E V E N S O N ,

16 who, having been first duly sworn, testified as follows:

17 WITNESS: My name is Linda Stevenson. I live
18 at 3024 Point Clear Drive.

19 I've lived in Tega Cay since 1995, and we have
20 seen the Tega Cay Water Service depend on the
21 neighbors in my area to report to them when the
22 warning sounds and the red lights are activated at
23 the lift stations located at 3028 Point Clear Drive
24 and 2081 Marquesas. There have been numerous times
25 when the sewer has spewed out of the station for

1 extended times, the raw sewage pouring into the
2 lake.

3 I will be submitting these pictures
4 [indicating]. They were taken in 2006, and the
5 only difference today is that it has been
6 camouflaged, painted by the neighbor who lives
7 there. This was always a problem when there was
8 heavy rainfall, but it's also occurred at times. I
9 personally took these pictures.

10 My grandchildren play in the water jumping
11 from our dock and enjoying the lake. My husband
12 and I also use the lake, and I'm always concerned
13 as to the cleanliness of the water. I have
14 complained and even took pictures to show the sewer
15 spewing out and running into the lake. Recently, I
16 spoke with Joe S. Faris, Jr., the program manager
17 of DHEC, about concerns for these safety issues
18 with the Tega Cay Water Service. I spoke at a
19 hearing in 2006 when there was a request by TCWS
20 for an increase in rates, and addressed these same
21 issues with these pictures.

22 I also reported my concern about the old well
23 station and pump house, which is located in the
24 cul-de-sac at the end of Point Clear Drive and the
25 top of my driveway. We requested that they move

1 record, if I may.

2 CHAIRMAN FLEMING: Yes, you may.

3 MR. MUSTIAN: Thank you, Madam Chairman.

4 Madam Chairman, the company's objection is as
5 follows: we object to testimony not substantiated
6 by data --

7 VOICE: Louder.

8 VOICES: Louder, please.

9 VOICE: Can't hear you.

10 VOICE: Why don't you get to the microphone?

11 MR. MUSTIAN: Can you hear me now? We object
12 to testimony not substantiated by data or not made
13 based upon scientific criteria, consisting of
14 complaints regarding quality of service. The bases
15 for these objections are: Patton versus Public
16 Service Commission, 312 S.E.2nd 257; Court of
17 Common Pleas' order in Tega Cay Water Service,
18 Civil Action No. 97-CP-40-0923; and Commission
19 Order No. 1999-191 in Docket No. 96-137-WS.

20 The Applicant would request that this
21 objection be deemed a continuing objection so that
22 there will not be a need for repeated objections
23 each time objectionable testimony is given, and
24 cites in support of that request for a continuing
25 objection the case of State versus Douglas,

ACCOUNT NUMBER	ACCOUNT NAME	SERVICE ADDRESS		
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]		
SERVICE FROM	SERVICE TO	DAYS OF SERVICE	BILL DATE	DUE DATE
10/02/2012	10/30/2012	28	11/05/2012	11/28/2012
TRANSACTION DESCRIPTION	METER SERIAL NO	PREVIOUS	CURRENT	USAGE

		PREVIOUS BALANCE		31.34
11/05/2012 WATER BILL	[REDACTED]	628580	629750	1170 12.89
11/05/2012 SEWER BILL	[REDACTED]	628580	629750	1170 12.57
10/24/2012 UTILITY PAYMENTS				-31.34

AFTER DUE DATE PAY	25.84
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PIN [REDACTED]

TOTAL DUE NOW	25.46
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NOTES: MAILING ADDRESS: P. O. BOX 3399, TEGA CAY, SC 29708
FOR ONLINE PAYMENT PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE @ WWW.TEGACAYSC.ORG !!!!!

Linda Stevenson

From: wagnerdo@comporium.net
Sent: Sunday, December 02, 2012 8:23 PM
To: lks@comporium.net
Subject: Unidentified object in drain pipe

When the sink in the bathroom no longer drained as it should, we decided to simply undo the drainage neck under the sink to clean out the drain. When Paul did that, the object in the picture slid out of the drainage pipe into the container. As you can imagine we were concerned with what that object was. I took the object to a biology professor for his input. He was not able to identify the object.

When Paul described this event to another person who had a degree in biology, he said that it sounded like it could possibly be a lamprey. A lamprey is a jawless fish-like vertebrate that attaches to fish and sucks the blood from the fish. They have become an increasing problem in the Great Lakes. It is possible that the lampreys could have been introduced into our lake system.

How that object got into our drain pipe is a mystery to us.....could a lamprey possibly have entered the sewer lines through a breach in a sewer line and then worked its way through the pipes to our drain??? The mouth of a lamprey has not only teeth but also suction cups which could possibly have allowed it to work its way through the pipes.

Paul & Dorinda Wagner



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----- Original Message -----

From: gcole@metlife.com

To: georgehice@comporium.net

Sent: Thursday, October 25, 2012 10:03 AM

Hi Ladies,

Tom, (one of the next door the neighbors at the site of the line break between his property and his upper neighbor), took these pictures. He had said he had 6 photos but apparently his wife only forward three. These are directly at the site and do not show the amount of red clay mud that came down the street to the storm drain. The volume that spread from the curb drain out to the middle of Molokai drive indicated quite a bit more than these

photos may indicate. Tom's wife was concerned about the mess that was made and ask the plumbing company what was going to be done about it and they said the repair site would have to be given a couple of days to settle and they would come back and clean up the site to completion,

We were given a call to boil drinking water until the further notice which came this morning on a robo call. Break occurred between Monday night and / or early Tuesday morning (10-22-12 / 10-23-12) They started to call TCWS between 7:00 am and approx. 8:15 am but said they got no response from anyone until after this time.

Franklin Plumbing out of Charlotte came out about 10:00 am to 10:45 and spent most of the day in doing the repair.

This is all that I know as I just walked up the hill from my place that morning and went over the details with Tom and he along with his neighbor was viewing the situation while continuing to try and get in contact with someone to come out.

George

Mrs. Cole sent this complaint via email to George Hice. George sent it to me & I sent it to ORS 10/26/12

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See attached documentation.

Note: George could not attend Dec. 3rd meeting with PSC due to health

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From: Linda Stevenson [mailto:lks@comporium.net]
Sent: Tuesday, October 09, 2012 5:44 PM
To: Campbell, Chad
Cc: heavilift@yahoo.com
Subject: TGWS Photos

Chad,

I spoke with this gentleman last week and he sent me this information for our records. Can you believe that TCWS put this sign in his home? Drinkable Water Is Not Guaranteed. Nee I say more about this company? Please register this as yet another complaint against this company.

Mr. Needham can be reached @ heavilift@yahoo.com.

Linda Stevenson
803-547--6523

Subject: TGWS Photos

Good Afternoon,

As promised, I am attaching photos of the engraved plastic sign (only one of three left) provided by a representative of the Tega Cay Water Service during 2006.

A little history.

A new water heater was installed during the 1995-96 winter. By 2001, the drain valve was not shutting off properly and we had a plumber on site. He had to replace an element of the electric water heater that was under seven and a half gallons of silt in the forty gallon tank AND vacuum the unit clean. A faucet from Moen also was scored due to silt and was replaced.

During 2006, the water heater again had a drain valve problem along with two showers not shutting off properly - a constant dripping. A complaint went out to Tega Cay Water Service from the plumber, and a representative from the company was at our home a week later and told us our problem was because "We had a bottom tap on the water main serving the street, and we should not have had it done that way." We didn't do the tap; the original contractor did it when the property service was installed in the 1970's. The representative then asked for access to the two bath rooms and kitchen to check the water. While at each location in the house he installed plastic engraved signs with double sided tape the state in three languages "Water may not consumable for humans." Great fix for the problem.

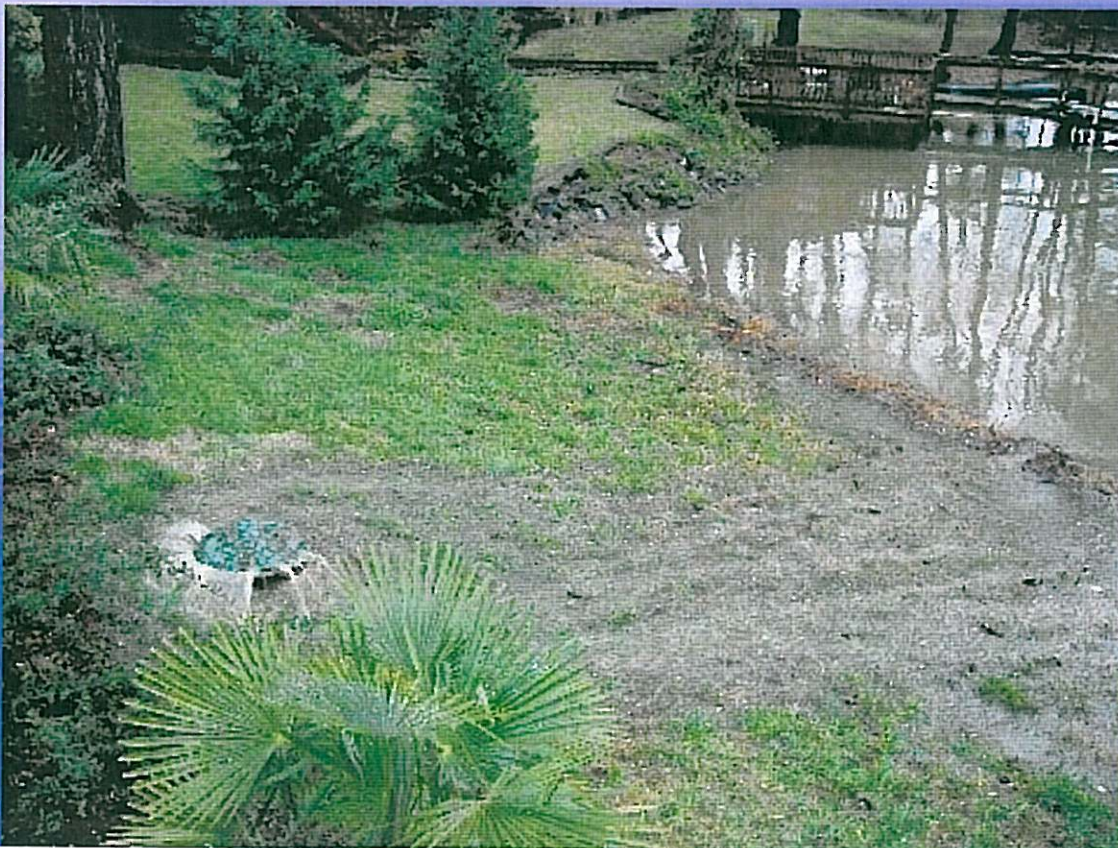
And during 2012, water heater problems, toilet, sink, and shower-tub leaking again. Brothers Plumbing replace the electric water heater, toilet (total new unit), and faucets.....all were scored due to gritty silt....AND, we had a whole house three stage filtration system installed (Aqua Sana) with a silt filter being first in line. The silt filter is a 90 day cartridge - but has to be changed each month due to the water being supplied by the Tega Cay Water Service with the approval of DHEC.

Any questions - send a line back to me at this address of the comporium address.

Kind regards,

George Needham
10051 Bora Bora Drive

Leaking sewer into the lake because of lift station #1 – This picture was sent to TC Water Citizens Advisory by a concerned citizen.



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1 stuff, and you'll see close-ups. As you can see on
2 the left, is a hinge pin that's missing, so even if
3 you lock it, you -- probably a kid could lift that
4 other end up. The conduit is separated, and
5 there's exposed wires. When I say exposed, they
6 still have insulation on them, but they put wires
7 in conduit for a reason, and there's some trash
8 there, that could have blown in, but who knows.
9 The next one, that's just a close-up of the conduit
10 separated. This was caused by lift station number
11 one. This was turned in by a concerned citizen.
12 Next one, this is new lift station number two
13 Marquesas. Again, this is in somebody's front
14 yard. You know, I mean it's a -- I guess we have
15 to live with it, but do they have to be quite so
16 big, but I'm happy we have it. The next --

17 **MR. TERRENI:** Mr. Chairman?

18 **CHAIRMAN WRIGHT:** Mr. Terreni?

19 **MR. TERRENI:** If I could just ask the Chair's
20 indulgence on this. It may save a lot of time for
21 everybody. If Mr. Kunzmann knows when a picture
22 has been taken, if he can tell us, that'd be great.
23 It will save me having to ask later.

24 **CHAIRMAN WRIGHT:** And thank you for that.
25 What -- because of the hearing, this rate

1 is the one in front of Linda's house, but we now
2 have a new lift station. This is new lift station
3 number three, thank you. Next one, this is lift
4 station number four. Pretty hard to get to it.
5 It's in somebody's backyard, but it's very hard to
6 get to the other way. This is an electric panel,
7 as you can see it's circled, the light part of --
8 excuse me, the lock, it's unlocked. Next page, 240
9 volts there it says. I'm assuming that voltage,
10 three-phase. Next one, some wires. I didn't see
11 where they were, 'cause they went in the sand -- in
12 the ground. I hope that those are disconnected and
13 not live wires. I assume they are, but I don't
14 know that for sure. This is an unseated manhole
15 cover. If you notice on the right-hand side that
16 it's kind of flush, and then that left-hand side
17 it's not. I believe DHEC finds that a problem.
18 This is lift station number five. During our
19 visit, some of the neighbors came out, and said
20 that it had never really been locked until
21 recently. This, that holds all these electric
22 meters and electric boxes and everything, the legs
23 are starting to rust on it. See the next picture,
24 one's already been repaired kind of temporarily.
25 [LAUGHTER FROM AUDIENCE] This one's totally rotted

Lift Station #5

7001 Tega Cay Drive

During our visit neighbors said that until recently this was never locked.



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